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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/084,467	02/28/2002	Kazuyuki Matsuda	04329.2751	4995

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EXAMINER	
DESHPANDE, KALYAN K	
ART UNIT	**PAPER NUMBER**
3623	

DATE MAILED: 03/24/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/084,467	MATSUDA ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Kalyan K. Deshpande	3623	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-14* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-14* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☒ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date *5/20/2003*.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Introduction

1. The following is a non-final office action in response to the communications received on February 28, 2002. Claims 1-14 are now pending in this application.

Information Disclosure Statement

2. The examiner has reviewed the patents and articles supplied in the Information Disclosure Statements (IDS) provided on May 20, 2003.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

> A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –
>
> (e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

4. Claims 1-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Charisius (U.S. Patent No. 6938240).

As per claim 1, Charisius et al. teaches:

An information management method of managing information generated in a group including a plurality of persons, said method comprising:

managing first information indicating a hierarchical order of a plurality of jobs (see column 14 lines 35-67 and figures 4 and 58; where workflow tasks or jobs are set forth with a hierarchy order of tasks to be completed), second information indicating

a time sequence in executing the plurality of jobs (see column 14 lines 35-67, column 15 lines 23-36, and figures 58-66; where the time of performance for each task is set. Each task can be performed a specified time or at the completion of a previous workflow task.), third information indicating a relationship between each job and a final product finally produced in executing that job (see column 15 lines 37-63 and figure 4; where the relationship between each task or job and the final product described. Figure 4 displays the relationship between each step and the final product), and fourth information indicating a relationship between each job and an intermediate product generated during that job (see column 15 lines 37-63 and figure 4; where the relationship between each task or job and an intermediate product is described. Figure 4 displays the relationship between each step and intermediate products.); and

selectively displaying the first to fourth information to be managed on a screen (see column 15 lines 64-67, column 16 lines 1-29, and figures 7-8; where the workflow is managed and displayed on a screen.).

As per claim 2, Charisius et al. teaches:

The method according to claim 1, wherein the plurality of jobs include a job generated in the group, and a job generated by a person (see column 19 lines 60-67 and column 20 lines 1-26; where specific jobs can be assigned to specific persons or specific roles. The workflow can consist of activities assigned to a plurality of persons. The workflow is a job generated in the group. Group is defined as an enterprise (per Specification page 1).

As per claim 3, Charisius et al. teaches:

The method according to claim 1, wherein the selectively displaying includes displaying one of the first to fourth information in response to a request from a person in a form which integrates a job associated with that person and a job generated in the group (see column 15 lines 64-67, column 16 lines 1-29, column 30 lines 25-67, column 31 lines 1-49 and figures 7-8 and 57-66; where each of the first through fourth information is displayed. The system monitors each activity as it is completed; the users can view the workflow as it is in progress and in relation to their assigned tasks.).

As per claim 4, Charisius et al. teaches:

The method according to claim 1, wherein the first to fourth information are managed by a server computer, and one of the first to fourth information is sent from the server computer to a client computer in response to a request from the client computer (see figure 2; where a server manages the information. Clients request the information from the server.).

As per claim 5, Charisius et al. teaches:

The method according to claim 1, wherein the selectively displaying includes displaying a Gantt chart which expresses the hierarchical order of the plurality of jobs and a Gantt chart which expresses the sequence of the plurality of jobs on independent screens (see column 30 lines 25-67, column 31 lines 1-49 and figures 58 and 60-66; where a Gantt charts are displayed, expressing the hierarchy order of jobs and the sequence of jobs.).

Claims 6-14 recite limitations already addressed by the rejections of claims 1-5; therefore the same rejections apply to these claims.

Conclusion

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The following are pertinent to the current invention, though not relied upon:

Dick et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 20020128890) teaches a system, method, and article of manufacture are provided for workflow management of a supply chain.

Reuveni (U.S. Patent Publication No. 20030229524) teaches a system for workflow analysis and response performs labor studies and operations research in cross-platform systems involving software usage and electronic data interchange.

Hayashi (U.S. Patent No. 6349287) teaches a work-flow support having: a processing wait task storage unit that temporarily stores a task execution request and a rule interpretation execution unit executes a task corresponding to the execution request stored in the rule interpretation execution unit under the execution of another task according to rules.

Sieron et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 20010032108) teaches a process automation system and accompanying method for the automated or semi-automated creation of workflow management procedures having an arbitrary number of tasks to be performed manually or via computer automation in specified sequences.

Chu (Chu, Johnny; "Hydro-Electric Corporations PMLink: A Case Study of Re-Engineering Through Workflow Computing", *Business Process Management Journal*, 1997, p. 162) teaches a flexible workflow method.

Baek et al. (Baek, Dong H.; Oh, Sang Y.; Yoon, Wan C.; "A Visualized Human-Computer Interactive Approach to Job Shop Scheduling", *Int. J. Computer Integrated Manufacturing*, 1999, pp. 75-83) teaches scheduling using Gantt charts.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kalyan K. Deshpande whose telephone number is (571) 272-5880. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8am-5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tariq Hafiz can be reached on (571) 272-6729. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

kkd

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